

REMARKS

This responds to the Office action dated 18 April 2005. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks. Claims 5, 11, and 12 have been amended. Claims 9, 10, 13-15, and 23-25 have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 1-8, 11, 12, and 16-22 remain pending in the application.

Allowable Claims

Applicant acknowledges the allowance of claims 1-4, 6-8, 16-22, and the indication that claims 11 and 12 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim. Claims 11 and 12 have been rewritten in independent form. Thus, claims 11 and 12 have not been narrowed in any way and retain their previous scope.

Response to Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the Examiner states that “one of the retaining members” lacks antecedent basis because claim 2 defines “a retaining member.” Applicant has amended claim 5 to recite “the retaining member.” Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

Response to Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 23 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,604,487 to Gilbert. Applicant has canceled claims 23 and 25, without prejudice.

Response to Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

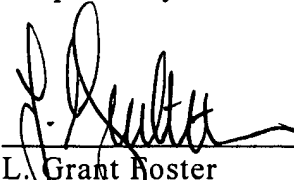
The Examiner rejected claims 9, 10, 13-15, and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Gilbert in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,224,479 to Osborn et al. Claims 9, 10, 13-15, and 24 have been canceled, without prejudice.

Conclusion

Applicant believes that all remaining claims are now in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to telephone the undersigned attorney if there are unresolved matters in the present application so that the examination process can be expedited.

Date: 18 JULY 2005

Respectfully submitted,



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